Key Features of Effective Assessment

Questioning
- Open and thoughtfully designed
  - "What have you tried so far?"
  - "What do you think will happen if…?
  - "Tell me more about…"
  - "Why do *you* think it happened that way?"
  - "How would *you* explain…?"
  - "What do *you* think about _____'s answer?"
  - "What could we add to _____'s comments
  - "_____said and ____thought—but how can we bring all these ideas together?"
  - "What questions do you have now?"
- Sufficient 'wait time' provided
- Used to Open an Inquiry and elicit students' initial understanding and reasoning.
- Used to interpret or make sense of data to generate greater understanding.
- Used to clarify or elaborate on observations and inferences.
- Used to encourage learners to justify their answers and/or to explain their reasoning.
- Used to apply learned ideas.
- Used to help learners to monitor their own learning.

Feedback
- Descriptive Feedback
  - Describes strengths upon which a student can build
  - Articulates the manner in performance falls short of desired criteria
  - Gives information that enables the learner to adjust their thinking/performance to improve understanding of content
  - Write legibly and clearly; Avoid using red pen
  - Produce quality comments that might direct and motivate students to improve their work.
- Evaluative Feedback
  - Describes how learner has performed as compared to others (Research shows that this kind of feedback often creates problems for student, as it does not address the manner in which further growth and development can be realized and may affect students' motivation to learn.

From Black et al 2003. --Assessment for Learning
Atkin & Coffey 2003-- Everyday Assessment in the Science Classroom
O'Brien-Carlson et al 2003 -- Weaving Science Inquiry and Continuous Assessment
Hart 1994—Authentic Assessment
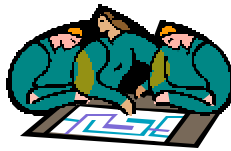
Self-Assessment
- A Key Focus of Assessment for Learning
- Peer-Assessment
  - Improves student motivation.
  - Strengthens student voice and improves communication student-student-teacher
    - Environment must be safe
    - Students must listen to each other.
    - Students must respect each other.
    - Goal is to motivate everyone (not build competition among students)
  - Students understand that learning works through exploration and challenge.
  - Includes language that students easily understand.

Sharing Criteria
- A critical component of formative assessment
- Connected with feedback and self-assessment strategies
- Formative use of Summative Assessment
- May involve use of Rubrics

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